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Lab to KURE Afghan Energy Ills

USAID and Kabul University collaborate to create a major center for the support of renewable energy activities in Afghanistan



Photo: Mujtaba Qaumi

An engineering graduate from Kabul University explains the operation of a solar-powered water pump to U.S. Deputy Ambassador E. Anthony Wayne at the KURE Lab inauguration.

USAID aims to foster energy independence and development through increased use of renewable energy technologies, increased energy efficiency, and establishment of a local renewable energy equipment and service industry.

Officials from Kabul University and the U.S. Government recently inaugurated the Kabul University Renewable Energy Laboratory (KURE Lab) with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and tour of the facility.

The KURE Lab was established by USAID, in collaboration with Kabul University, to help ensure the self-sustainability of renewable energy projects being implemented throughout Afghanistan. USAID is helping the country achieve energy independence and economic development through projects that maximize the use of renewable energy resources – primarily solar, wind, and micro-hydro.

The KURE Lab is intended to serve as a multipurpose facility for renewable energy education, research, component testing, and evaluation for engineers. In operation since December 2010 following a major refurbishment, the lab is already the focus of a broad range of renewable energy activities. Private-sector companies and non-governmental organizations use the lab to train their employees on solar streetlights and solar-home systems. The Ministry of Rehabilitation and Rural Development brings photovoltaic modules there to verify their quality.

Some KURE Lab activities are associated with the goal of getting women more involved in energy issues. At the end of February, the lab was the venue for a workshop called “Management and Leadership in Energy Projects for Women.” This was in support of the Afghan Women in Energy Association, an organization for women working in energy-related fields.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, Professor Hamidullah Amin, Chancellor of Kabul University, noted, “Renewable energy is important for the development of a country, and Afghanistan has many renewable energy resources. I appreciate the assistance of the American people in establishing this laboratory at our engineering faculty.”

USAID is committed to building the capacity of the Afghan government to provide its people with clean renewable energy to power their homes, schools, and businesses. Clean and inexpensive energy will power Afghanistan’s economic growth, improve schools, clinics, government services, and the safety and quality of life for thousands of Afghans. USAID expects the KURE Lab will continue to develop as a major center for the support of renewable energy activities in Afghanistan.